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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 007580

SIPDIS

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JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL
Grossman: Turkey a center in the fight against terror -
Cumhuriyet
Grossman stresses solidarity against terror - Milliyet
Grossman: US, Turkey both victims of terror - Turkiye
Grossman: Cyprus must be solved by May 2004 - Sabah
Ankara to Grossman: Turkey a state of law, not an emirate -
Hurriyet
Denktas: Turkey has a right to interfere in TRNC elections -
Hurriyet
New YOK Chairman: Headscarf a political symbol - Milliyet
Terror hits Iraq, Russia, Greece on Tuesday - Turkiye
Chechen suicide bombers' real target was Duma - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS
US preoccupied with Incirlik, Cyprus - Radikal
US Administration wants to use Incirlik base - Zaman
US presses for urgent solution based on Annan Plan - Zaman
Grossman: We want Incirlik - Yeni Safak
Bombs shake Iraq - Yeni Safak
Israel, US launch joint operations against Iraqi resisters -
Yeni Safak
PM Erdogan: We want fair elections in TRNC-Cumhuriyet
AKP steps back on Koran courses - Cumhuriyet
Bombs target Putin's election victory - Radikal

BRIEFING

Undersecretary Grossman in Ankara: US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman, visited Ankara on Tuesday to discuss the future of Incirlik Air Base, dailies report. 'We would like to see our cooperation with Turkey continue regarding the use of Incirlik base,' Grossman said after meeting with Foreign Minister Gul in Ankara on Tuesday. Ankara responded positively to the adjustments proposed by the US, according to "Zaman." Papers believe that Grossman's visit has shown Turkey as a center in the fight against terror, and that Turkey is seen as a key country for realignment of US forces overseas. Grossman asked Ankara to display flexibility regarding the use of Incirlik. The Turkish side reminded Grossman that parliamentary approval is essential for the transportation of military equipment and deployment of troops abroad. The Turks told Grossman that Turkey is a state of law, 'not an emirate,' according to "Hurriyet." Grossman also underlined the necessity of a joint struggle against terrorism. 'Both the US and Turkey have been the victims of terror,' Grossman said, noting that the bombings in Istanbul should not be linked to developments in Iraq. Grossman also signaled possible changes to conditions on the \$8.5 billion US loan for Turkey, "Aksam" reports. Dailies say that the US is waiting for a response to the US proposal for expanding Incirlik base and launching joint military exercises.

Asked about Cyprus, Grossman said the US is hopeful that the December 14 elections in the TRNC would create an opportunity for resuming negotiations within the framework of the Annan Plan. "Cumhuriyet" claims that Washington has promised Turkey to extend every possible support for a solution in Cyprus before May 2004. Ankara and the Turkish Cypriots are working on changes to the Annan Plan, according

to "Cumhuriyet."

Cyprus: Turkish Cypriot opposition leader Mehmet Ali Talat said the visit to Cyprus by Turkey's deputy Prime Minister Abdullatif Sener had cast a cloud over the December 14 elections. Sener announced over the weekend a financial aid package amounting to \$160 million for the TRNC economy. Turkish Cypriot leader Denktas criticized Talat, saying that Ankara was not interfering in the elections even though it had a 'right' to do so due as a guarantor of the Cyprus agreement. Prime Minister Erdogan said on Tuesday that his party was neither supporting the status quo in TRNC nor abandoning the Cyprus cause.

Turkey, Syria: A Turkish parliamentary group for friendship with Syria met with Syrian President Bashar Assad during its four-day visit to Syria. Assad pointed to the close historical, political and cultural relationship between Syria and Turkey, and assured the delegation that it would help prevent terrorist attacks from Syrian territory to Turkey. Assad wants to turn a new page in Syria's relations with Ankara.

AKP government soft on Hizbulah: In a front-page report, "Cumhuriyet" slams the ruling AK Party government for attempting to punish police chiefs who carried out successful operations against the fundamentalist terror organization Hizbulah in Turkey's southeastern provinces of Diyarbakir, Gaziantep, Adana and Hakkari. The government is assigning terrorist experts with experience in fighting against Hizbulah to less responsible posts. This has provided Hizbulah with more room to maneuver. Official figures indicate that there are 10,000 Hizbulah militants involved in underground activities throughout Turkey.

AKP pulls back on Koran course regulation: Religious Affairs (Diyanet) Director-General Prof. Ali Bardakoglu announced after a meeting with President Sezer that a controversial regulation removing restrictions on Koran courses would be withdrawn. The president and the military have conveyed their anxiety over the new regulation to Bardakoglu and urged changes. The Diyanet's new regulation would have allowed Koran courses to be open all year round, including during evening hours. The mainstream media have strongly criticized the regulation for attempting to attract working and needy children to Koran courses.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Campaign against terrorism; Russian Elections

"NATO's role in the fight against terrorism"
Sami Kohen wrote in mass appeal Milliyet (12/10): "Generally speaking, there is a consensus about giving NATO a primary role in the fight against terrorism. The arguments are good enough to justify this mission for NATO, given NATO's influential role in local conflict resolution and the fact that it is more flexible than the UN. Yet the goal of using NATO in the fight against terrorism requires a restructuring within the alliance. The current organizational model is not conducive to reaching the anti-terrorism goal. NATO and the UN should go through a simultaneous restructuring in order to recast themselves as global security organizations. . There is also a lack of international consensus about the concept and definition of terrorism. The terrorism threat has become global, but NATO and the EU have not yet reached a consensus about its definition. It is expected that NATO will eventually be able to show a capability to respond to terrorism in a determined and speedy way, just like it did against global military threats in the past."

"The Russian Elections"
Hadi Uluengin wrote in mass appeal Hurriyet (12/10): "The elections in Russia will not change anything. The results indicate a victory for Putin's 'Unified Russia' Party, which is responsible for the Chechen problem. Moreover, Jirinovski's party has become stronger than before. In reality, the result achieved by modern and liberal parties in Russia constitutes only 5 percent of the total vote. . It seems that Russians are still supportive of their autocratic tradition and are not yet taken by the idea of a civilian democracy. The election results also indicate a guaranteed victory for Putin in the upcoming presidential elections. The fact of the matter is that societies with heavy authoritarian traditions tend to resist change even if it may be good for them. In the Russian example, the society has apparently favored despotism and autocracy at the expense of democracy."

EDELMAN